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ASSISTANT TEACHERS AND TEACHERS' AIDES--TRAINING AND ROLES OF AUXILIARY PERSONNEL FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

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THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER'S AIDE IN THE CLASSROOM HAS OFTEN BEEN DEFINED AS THAT OF A HELPER WITH ROUTINE DUTIES. WHEN PROPERLY PREPARED, HOWEVER, SUCH AUXILIARY PERSONNEL CAN ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE TEACHING-LEARNING SITUATION. THE TEACHER ASSISTANT PERFORMS MANY OF THE SAME DUTIES AS THE HEAD TEACHER BUT IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OVERALL PROGRAM. THE TEACHER AIDE ASSISTS IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TEACHER'S DUTIES. THE TEACHER AIDE OR ASSISTANT SHOULD HAVE SKILLS APPROPRIATE TO HER FUNCTION, SENSITIVITY IN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS, AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF GROUP DYNAMICS. TRAINING PROGRAMS SHOULD INCLUDE CAREFULLY COORDINATED SEQUENCES OF STUDENT TEACHING, CLASSWORK, SEMINARS FOR FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION, AND INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING. INTENSIVE PRESERVICE TRAINING OF THE AIDE WILL STRENGTHEN THE ENTIRE EDUCATIVE PROCESS, AND THE ASSISTANT WHO HAS COMPLETED A 2-YEAR DEGREE PROGRAM WILL FREE THE TEACHER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNIQUES, MATERIALS, AND INNOVATIVE METHODS. THE AUTHORS OUTLINE PROPOSED JOB DESCRIPTIONS, SELECTION PROCESSES, DESIRABLE PERSONAL QUALITIES, AND TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR BOTH TYPES OF POSITIONS. (WO)

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ASSISTANT TEACHERS and TEACHERS' AIDES

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

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CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

Training and Roles of Auxiliary Personnel

For Early Childhood Education Programs

JC 660 356

PREFACE

Heretofore the role of the teachers' aide in the preschool and the kindergarten has been defined mainly as that of, "a helper with the routine duties". The role of the aide has been limited to functions involving duties, such as serving snacks, dressing children, setting up (or taking down) cots, hanging artwork, putting away toys, and collecting milk money. It is our concept that with intensive pre-service training the aide can strengthen the total program.

The role of the trained assistant teacher (with a two-year degree) in the preschool and the kindergarten setting has been perceived as one which encompasses many of the duties outlined above, with added responsibilities, such as assisting during music, story-telling time, and games; as well as setting up curriculum materials and long-range program planning, and participating in discussions with the staff concerning the children's development, with knowledgeable insight into behavior.

Although physical preparation and "keeping the house in order" are very important in the Early Childhood Education program, we believe that the trained assistant and the trained aide can often interchange roles and functions. And, together, or individually, can relieve the teacher of some of her present functions so that the teacher can, in turn, give more attention and time to developing specialized skills and creative planning for the entire group.

The teacher should be the innovator. For example, the ways or methods she uses to translate an interesting story into a dramatic play situation (for five year olds) can involve the children in "acting out" words, so that they begin to get a feeling for language. A skillful teacher can help a child with undeveloped language skills by listening to him, reading with him, or making a tape recording and playing it back, so that the child can hear himself and begin to recognize his difficulties. It is equally important for the teacher to have time to speak to the mother of a disturbed child, when the

child arrives in the morning, as well as during scheduled conferences. The teacher, familiar with the attention span of each child, should have time to find suitable materials for both the child with gross motor coordination, as well as the child with finely coordinated dexterity.

It is our philosophy that the assistant and the aide, trained with the appropriate skills and the sensitivity toward human relationships, and given some understanding of group dynamics can actively participate in the teaching-learning situation. The assistant and the aide can supplement the teacher's role to the degree whereby the teacher can emerge as the real leader of the group and use her leadership skills to the fullest extent to which her personality and professional training will allow. Thus, the teacher becomes the catalyst to stimulate the minds and hearts of her children and the staff with whom she works. The teacher must be given ample freedom and perspective to develop and operate in this role.

Any training program for assistant teachers or aides, in order to be effective, should have a closely coordinated sequence of student teaching, classwork, seminars for feedback and discussion, and individual counseling.

We also recommend the use of trained assistants and aides in the primary grades, with a similar orientation, but with the addition of a deeper understanding of children in their middle years, and some basic study of the content areas of reading, social sciences, and language skills.

With this in mind we offer the following selection criteria, qualities, training, and description of duties and responsibilities for the preschool and kindergarten trained assistant and trained aide.

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"All people . . . are growing people and members of one society. They should be educated with imagination and an appreciation of the wonder of the human mind."

from

TEACHERS' AIDES — A NEW OPPORTUNITY

a film based on the 1965 Summer Institute

ASSISTANT TEACHER

SELECTION

Initial screening through recommendation by two or three faculty members who know student.

Interviewed by Chairman of Child Study Department prospective student is asked: 1) reasons for wanting to major in Child Study 2) review of previous academic record 3) previous experience with children and 4) self-evaluation — patience, emotional stability, self-esteem, etc.

QUALITIES

Vitality and stamina

Warmth in personal relationships, toward both adults and children, and ability to work with them

Patience and sensitivity

Interest in community problems

Concern for and respect of children and their needs

Motivation and intellectual curiosity

Objectivity and ability to take criticism

Self-confidence

AIDE

SELECTION

Recruited through high schools and colleges, social and welfare agencies, community action programs, and mass communications media.

Personal in-depth interview with Director of Program.

Candidates screened as to: 1) interest in working with young children 2) desire to work in diversified settings 3) personal and academic recommendations concerning candidate's qualifications for working with young children — emotional stability (See "Qualities") and 4) academic ability to successfully participate in program.

QUALITIES

Dedicated to working with children

Recognizes the importance of Early Childhood Education

Warmth, sense of humor, flexibility, empathy, self-understanding, leadership, sense of responsibility and a feeling of self-esteem

Understanding and sensitivity to community and diversified cultural problems

Interested in achievement

Cooperative toward authority

Awareness of people and social problems

ASSISTANT TEACHER

TRAINING

Supervised student teaching — 12 hours a week; 320 hours per year.

These are either one semester or one year courses.

Courses in:

- Child Development
- General Psychology
- Child Psychology
- Nursery School — Kindergarten Education
  (Including: Philosophy of Nursery School and Kindergarten Programs; Teaching Techniques; Curriculum Planning; Knowledge of Parent-Teacher Relationships)
- Curriculum Materials
  (Including: A Survey of Children's Literature; Creative Arts for Children; Science for Preschoolers; Equipment for Nursery Schools and Kindergartens)
- Music for Children
- Sociology (In particular, Sociology of the Family)
- Nutrition
- English

AIDE

TRAINING

Supervised student teaching — 20 hours a week;
120 hours for an intensive six-week program.

Courses in:

- Workshop in Teaching Techniques
  Understanding of Child Behavior; Program Planning; Sensitivity Training (attitudes and values)
- Dynamics of the Child — Study of Child Development
  (Including: Knowledge of stages of growth of normal children between the ages of two and five, with emphasis on understanding their emotional, social and physical capabilities and ways in which they learn; Differences in behavior patterns of children from various socio-economic backgrounds; Peer and family relationships; Values; Self-concepts — ego development; Record taking and observations of children's behavior)
- The School — Philosophy of Education
  (Including: Physical setup of plant; Philosophy of the School; Teacher and Program; Parental Relationships; Use of community resources and agencies; Child in Poverty)
- Curriculum Materials
  (Including: A survey of Children's Literature; Creative Arts for Children; Science for Preschoolers)
- Special seminar in Health, Nutrition, and First Aid
- Music for Children
- Remedial Reading Program (Tailored to the needs of each student)

ASSISTANT TEACHER

DUTIES

The assistant teacher is expected to **perform** most of the same duties as the head teacher, but is not responsible for the overall program.

Program Activities:

- Direct individual children and groups in any area of the curriculum — including, reading stories, presenting music, introducing creative activities
- Keep records and write reports
- Supervise and handle individual children and groups
- Understand the causes **behind** children's behavior and deal with behavioral problems
- Acquire a knowledge of the community setting
- Participate in all school meetings — staff, faculty, parent
- Ability to work effectively with other disciplines

Routine Duties:

- Assist teacher in setting up and preparation of creative materials, such as: paints, dough, collages and science projects
- Help teacher supervise all other activities, including: water play, block and housekeeping corners, and outdoor play
- Help teacher in routines of: cleaning up, toileting, snack or lunch time, rest time, and dressing
- Help teacher plan and execute trips

AIDE

DUTIES

The aide is expected to **assist** in many of the same duties as the assistant teacher, but is not responsible for the overall program.

Program Activities:

- Prepare painting materials and assist during activity
- Assist with music program — singing and rhythms
- Read stories
- Assist in dramatics and creative role playing
- Plan games
- Assist and plan science materials and nature trips
- Use verbal skills with children
- Participate in program planning, and in staff meetings to discuss children's development
- Act as a liaison to families, giving feedback to the head teacher

Routine Duties:

- Supervise children's activities
- Prepare materials and cleanup of equipment, and supervise children in cleanup
- Set up and serve snacks and lunch
- Accompany children en route to and from school, on trips, and to medical appointments
- Dress children
- Set up cots for rest
- Assist children with wash-up and toileting
- Assist in care of pets